GOLD MUCHALAT PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

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Approved by:

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GOLD MUCHALAT PROVINCIAL PARK
Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role
The **primary** role of Gold Muchalat Provincial Park is the protection of significant wildlife habitat on Vancouver Island. By protecting significant aquatic and riparian habitat associated with the two rivers and protecting undisturbed portions of the watershed from valley bottom to height of land, the park provides critical habitat for a number of at-risk wildlife species such as marbled murrelets, steelhead, and Roosevelt elk (which utilize the park for winter habitat). Sockeye salmon spawn in the Muchalat River while summer steelhead, rainbow trout and coho are found in both the Muchalat and Gold rivers.

Secondary Role
The **secondary** role is to protect the natural values associated with the temperate rainforest on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The park protects an important trans-valley corridor of old growth Douglas-fir and western hemlock trees. Much of this forest type has been altered by harvesting and is no longer in its natural state. The park protects remnants of old growth forests that once dominated this area.

Gold Muchalat Provincial Park is located in the Northern Island Mountains Ecosection (NIM) which is under represented in the protected areas system at 9.12%. It is one of 18 parks that contribute to the protection of this ecosection.

Tertiary Role
The **tertiary** role is to provide remote recreation in the form of hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing. Gold Muchalat Provincial Park is located on the Gold and Muchalat rivers, approximately 15 kilometres northwest of Gold River on central Vancouver Island. No facilities are provided but walk-in camping is allowed. Hiking is possible by a user-made trail along the river's edge or deactivated logging roads that allow foot access into the more heavily forested areas of the park. White water kayaking and rafting are popular activities that are pursued on the waters of the Gold and Muchalat rivers.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Recreational impacts (fishing and hunting and associated uses) on natural values	➢ Work with Fish and Wildlife Science and Allocation staff to protect elk and fish populations. ➢ Monitor levels of use and ease of access, particularly during hunting season.
Illegal activities: botanical harvesting by local community and poaching	➢ Develop educational program to promote awareness within the local community about park values and appropriate uses. ➢ Enforcement patrols as required.
Impact of adjacent land use on park values	➢ Since the park is not large enough to be a self sustaining ecosystem, work with Ministry of Forests and industry to take park values into consideration during forest development and to help with restoration of logged areas.

Lack of knowledge of cultural values	➢ Undertake cultural inventory and traditional use study of whole park in conjunction with First Nations.
First Nations relations	➢ Develop good working relationships with First Nations to develop an understanding and appreciation of protected area status and park values.

Zoning

Special Feature Zone – covers the entire park (645 ha). The objective of this zone is to protect and present significant natural or cultural features, resources, or processes because of their special character, fragility and heritage values. This park is zoned Special Feature given old growth forests values and Roosevelt elk winter habitat.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Makes a small contribution of 1.22% to the representation of the Northern Island Mountains Ecosection. This ecosection is under represented in the protected areas system (9.12%).
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Contributes 2.74% to the overall representation of CWHxm2, which has only 4.13% protected provincially. Contributes very minimally to the representation of CWHvm1 and CWHvm2, which have only 7.01% protected and 8.72% protected provincially. Gold Muchalat Park contributes only 0.03% and 0.05% to CWHvm1 and CWHvm2 respectively, but is important as it protects old growth remnants of these highly modified ecosystems. Very minimal contribution (0.01%) to the representation of MHmm1, which is well represented in the protected areas system at 16%.
Special Features	☒	Old growth forest remnants
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	Nationally threatened and provincially *red-listed* marbled murrelet; *blue-listed* Roosevelt elk
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Roosevelt elk winter range, old growth

Recreation

Representation		
backcountry	☐	Not Applicable
destination	☐	Not Applicable
travel corridor	☐	Not Applicable
local recreation	☒	Hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing
Special Opportunities	☐	None known at this time
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Roosevelt elk, fish, old growth

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☐	Values not well known
Special Feature	☒	Gathering/harvesting area, culturally modified trees

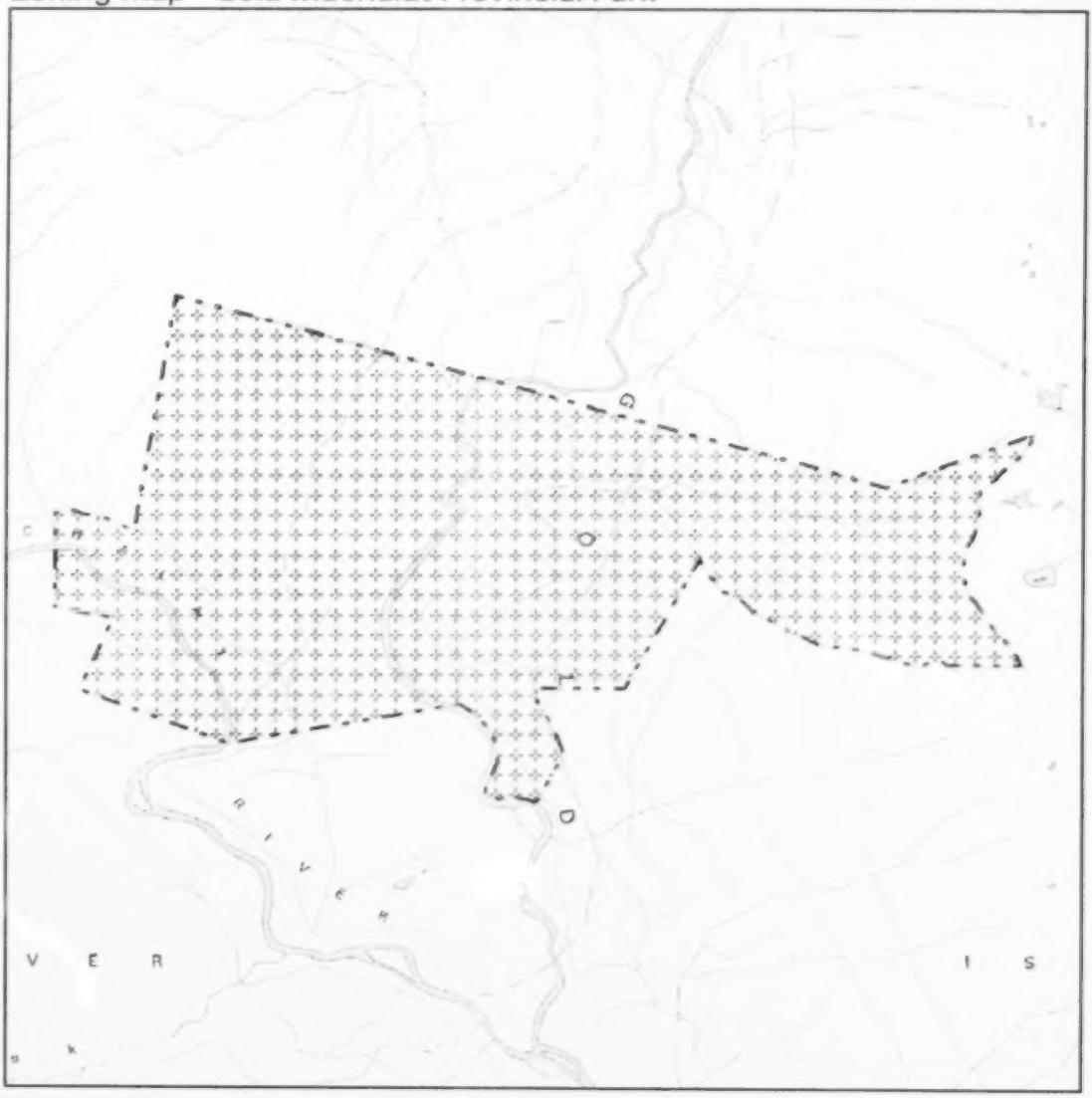
Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	Not Applicable
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of protected areas on central Vancouver Island
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	Not Applicable
Partnerships	☐	Not Applicable
Vulnerability	☒	The size of the park puts the values at risk
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Recommended for protection in the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan as Goal 2 Special Feature.

Area: 645 hectares

Date of establishment: April 30, 1996

Zoning Map - Gold Muchalat Provincial Park



Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Special Feature
Protected Area Boundary

0 1
km

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